

Packing, Mr. Caprara and his family became the definition of what it means to be a successful family farm.

But Dennis Caprara was not just a farmer, he was a leader. He served as Chairman of the Grower-Shipper Association, director of the Salinas Valley River Coalition, and as a distinguished fellow at a local college. Over the years, he received many honors and awards, such as: CSUMB Distinguished Fellow-Ag Businessman of the Year, Salinas Area Chamber of Commerce Agriculture Leadership Award, and Future Farmers of America Honorary Chapter Farmer.

Dennis also gave back to the community that gave him so much. He was a member of the Swiss Rifle Club and always attended the local livestock auctions where he and his wife, Janice, were active bidders, supporting the young leaders of 4H and Future Farmers of America.

Mr. Caprara was a friend and a mentor to many, including myself. He offered so much to those who knew him, who worked with him, who listened to him, and who loved him.

Madam Speaker, today we mourn the loss of Dennis Caprara. But because of Dennis, every day we realize that the Salad Bowl of life tastes so good, not just because of its products, but also because of its people.

RECOGNIZING THE DONOHO
SCHOOL CLASS 2A STATE
VOLLEYBALL TITLE

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Donoho School Lady Falcons for winning the AHSAA Class 2A state volleyball title.

Donoho beat Pleasant Valley to secure their third state title in the past four years. The game was played at Birmingham's Bill Harris Arena on October 26, 2022.

Securing this state title brings the volleyball program to 13 total state championships.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Coach Anna Taylor, the volleyball team, students, faculty and all the fans. Go Lady Falcons.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF VICE
ADMIRAL BILL MERZ

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the service of Vice Admiral Bill Merz, who will retire from the U.S. Navy on December 1, 2022, after nearly 40 years in uniform. His long and distinguished service to our nation reflects an unwavering devotion to duty and great love of country.

Vice Admiral Merz earned his commission from the United States Naval Academy in 1986 and upon graduation entered the fleet as a newly minted submarine officer. Having first qualified aboard the attack submarine USS *Haddo* (SSN 604), he subsequently qualified

in surface warfare while serving aboard the submarine tender USS *Proteus* (AS 19), which was the last remaining vessel in service that observed the end of World War II from Tokyo Bay. After commanding the nuclear deep-sea vessel "NR-1," the attack submarine USS *Memphis* (SSN 691), and Submarine Development Squadron Twelve, his sea-going career concluded aboard the USS *Blue Ridge* (LCC 19) as commander of the U.S. 7th Fleet.

Merz' service ashore reflected the same rigors he faced at sea, serving in prestigious and demanding roles as Director, Undersea Warfare Division (OPNAV N97); Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Requirements (OPNAV N9); and in his final tour of duty, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans, and Strategy (OPNAV N3N5). During his time at the Pentagon, he had the duty to frequently appear as a witness before congressional committees, and to present budgets and policy. This can be an arduous experience at times, but Admiral Merz never lost his patience, composure, or civility. He treated every member with respect and showed a refreshing willingness to listen to suggestions. As Chair of the Seapower Subcommittee for the last four years, I had the opportunity to see up close the seriousness and authenticity with which he approached his job. He understood that Article one, Section eight, Clause thirteen of the U.S. Constitution vested in Congress the authority to 'provide and maintain a Navy.' As exasperating as that arrangement can sometimes be, Admiral Merz adhered to that edict and thus kept faith with his oath to the Constitution from the day he left Annapolis to his departure on 1 December, 2022.

Madam Speaker, as the proud Representative of Naval Submarine Base New London—the Submarine Capital of the World—I recognize the immense sacrifice Bill has made for this country. Few choose a life that takes them away from their family, but fewer still choose a life in the "Silent Service," where submariners endure deployments without the luxury of frequent communication with their loved ones. For this reason, I ask the Members to also recognize the service and sacrifice of the Men family—his wife Martha, his daughter Caroline, and his sons Thomas and Matthew—without whom these past 40 years could not have been possible. They have been an integral part of the admiral's long journey and deserve our nation's thanks.

As Bill brings to an end this chapter of his life and hangs up the uniform, I ask that we honor him today for his many years of leadership and service to our great Nation. To that end, it is most appropriate that my colleagues in the House join me in celebrating Vice Admiral Bill Merz and wishing him and his family all the best as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

HONORING THE WORK AND RETIREMENT OF WILLIAM "CHIP" R. MURRAY

HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in celebration of William "Chip" R. Mur-

ray, for his retirement after a stunning 47-year career in service to two of our Nation's greatest resources: our forests and the millions of Americans who own and manage them.

After beginning his career at the U.S. Department of the Interior, Chip found his way into forestry in 1989. Chip focused on forestry issues for more than 20 years at the American Forest & Paper Association, where he served as Deputy General Counsel and Executive Director of Forestry. In that role, he oversaw forestry programs that helped forest owners manage their land to meet the objectives of the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act. Chip also spearheaded important improvements to various legislation impacting the forestry sector.

In 2010, Chip joined the National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO) as Vice President for Policy, and General Counsel. His work at NAFO over the last 12 years has focused on ensuring that policymakers understand and appreciate private forestry's deeply rooted culture of sustainability and the vast environmental benefits private working forests provide—from climate mitigation and clean air to clean water and wildlife habitat.

Chip's work on wildlife conservation is perhaps his most enduring legacy. Chip led the development of the Wildlife Conservation Initiative, a pioneering partnership between private landowners and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) to conserve at-risk and declining species on private forestlands. Under Chip's leadership, NAFO's Wildlife Conservation Initiative has become the gold standard of collaborative species conservation. Today, NAFO members and the USFWS are partnering on voluntary conservation projects in every legacy USFWS region in the country.

Throughout his career, Chip has led and participated in a wide variety of forestry sector organizations and coalitions. He is widely known for his encyclopedic knowledge of forestry, his rich institutional memory, and the passion he brings to any issue he touches. Chip is generous with his time, insights, and mentorship, to the great benefit of several generations of forestry professionals.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the outstanding career of Chip Murray, spent in service to our nation's abundant privately owned forests. Today we honor Chip and the lasting impact he has had on the forestry community, both inside and outside of government. We wish him and Ellen well as they start the next chapter of their lives—enjoying many adventures that undoubtedly will include time well spent in the forest.

HONORING LAURA TUCKER

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Laura Tucker of Salem, Virginia, upon receiving the Charles Brown Award from Roanoke College. The award recognizes citizens of Salem who have made significant contributions to the well-being of the City and its people, and Ms. Tucker is certainly deserving of the honor.

Ms. Tucker works for the Salem Water Department and as an instructional assistant in

Salem City Schools, but she dedicates so much more of her time and her effort to the City. Through Junior Achievement of South-west Virginia, she mentors elementary school students through programs on financial literacy, good citizenship, entrepreneurship, and career paths. JA named her its volunteer of the year in 2018.

For Salem's 215th birthday, Ms. Tucker co-founded a grassroots social media group, Salem215, to celebrate the City and share news about its cultural, economic, and governmental activities. She is also a staunch patron of Roanoke College's Toy Like Me program to modify toys for children with disabilities, donating to it, referring children to it, and assisting with its activities.

I would like to offer Laura my sincerest congratulations on receiving the Charles Brown Award, a recognition of all the good that she has done and continues to do for our hometown.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME PROGRAM

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, as the Chairman of the Ways and Means Worker and Family Subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Supplemental Security Income Program—or SSI, it is an honor and privilege to recognize the 50th Anniversary of this essential program that serves as our nation's fundamental safety net for low-income seniors and people with disabilities.

The charge that a humane society should care for its vulnerable is long-standing. The Chinese philosopher Confucius said: "In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of." The Jewish teaching of tzedakah advocates treating every person with righteousness and justice. In the book of Matthew, Jesus said, "As you did it to one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it to me." And, Mahatma Gandhi indicated that "the true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members."

In the 20th century, our country established and improved programs that created the foundation of a system to care for vulnerable Americans—such as FDR's New Deal, LBJ's Great Society, and the hundreds of laws to strengthen these programs. Fifty years ago, many low-income Americans with significant disabilities experienced painful hardship because they lacked the monthly income to support themselves. No federal program met their needs; rather, each state had separate rules for who could receive benefits, for how long, and for how much.

In 1972, a Democratic Congress and a Republican President recognized the challenges faced by low-income people with severe disabilities and amended the Social Security Act to replace the inadequate, inconsistent, state support system with a permanent, national

benefits program that offers a minimum, monthly income. As a federal program, SSI consolidated several state and federal elderly anti-poverty and disability programs into one program to support the most vulnerable.

Today, SSI provides food, shelter, heat in the winter, and dignity to more than 7.6 million American seniors and those with severe disabilities. In Cook County, Illinois, which includes my Congressional District, over 140,000 people rely on SSI to help buy food, pay rent, keep the lights on, and pay out-of-pocket health care costs. Importantly, SSI eligibility often increases eligibility for other important benefits—such as state public assistance, Medicaid, and SNAP—to also assist with critical expenses, like hospital stays, doctors' bills, and prescriptions.

In addition to supporting seniors and adults with disabilities, SSI benefits also help many children with disabilities and health conditions access the specialized care and treatment they need. Further, SSI helps compensate for the loss of income that is common for parents managing their children's complex care. Over 33,000 Illinois children receive these vital supports each month.

As we reflect on the strengths of SSI, we also must recognize the need for improvement. Given that SSI represents the only income for more than half of SSI recipients, we have a responsibility to ensure that the program truly protects disabled and elderly Americans from poverty and hardship. Further due to our country's history of systemic racism, including in employment and health care, people of color disproportionately experience poverty and disability compared to their peers. Consequently, policymakers need to modernize the SSI program to promote stability for the most vulnerable Americans.

We must improve monthly benefits to protect the elderly and disabled from suffering in poverty. We must adjust the asset limits for inflation. Currently, the program caps monthly savings at \$2,000 and \$3,000 for participating individuals and couples. If we adjusted asset limits for inflation since 1972, the asset cap for individuals would be \$9,000. Raising assets limits would allow millions of beneficiaries to appropriately save for emergencies, rather than having to make immoral choices between food or shelter or health. Additionally, we need to increase the outdated income limits that remain the same as they were 50 years ago. In short, we must modernize the SSI program so that it effectively supports the poorest Americans, bolstering dignity and well-being.

I am especially proud that, as we mark the 50th anniversary of SSI, my colleagues and I at the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Worker and Family Support continue working closely with the Social Security Administration to improve outreach to those missing seniors and people with disabilities as they reopen their field offices, but there is much more we need to do to help reconnect those whom the pandemic disconnected from SSI, either from applying for initial benefits or being separated from current benefits.

As we celebrate five decades of the SSI program, I would like to recognize the amazing local disability advocates who tirelessly provide the on-going, vital help for vulnerable individuals in Chicago. These organizations serve as points of access for long-term sup-

ports and services, including home health care and assistive technology. They help expand and defend people's rights, including supporting self-advocacy groups and legal assistance. A few of these wonderful organizations are:

- Access Living
- The Arc of Illinois
- Chicago ADAPT
- Chicago Health Advocates
- Equip for Equality
- Health and Disability Advocates
- Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Illinois Department of Aging
- Legal Counsel for Health Justice
- Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities
- Voices for Illinois Children

In closing, I celebrate the first 50 years of the Supplemental Security Income program, and I promise to continue to fight for dignity for our most vulnerable citizens to make SSI's impact even bigger over the next 50 years.

RECOGNIZING MS. ANAMARIA LABAO CABATO, OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER IN THE 51ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Mr. VARGAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Anamaria Labao Cabato, an outstanding arts and culture advocate and community member in the 51st Congressional District.

Ms. Cabato is being honored for her long-time commitment to advancing multicultural arts through various programs and initiatives. She is the Executive Director of PASACAT Philippine Performing Arts Company and has been involved with the organization since its inception 52 years ago in 1970. PASACAT is comprised of dancers, instrumentalists, and "harana" singers. As many as thirty performances are given yearly to various educational, cultural, religious, and social organizations in the region.

Ms. Cabato serves as a board member of the San Diego Area Dance Alliance, was a founding partner of VOCAL, (Voices of Community at All Levels) and is a member of the City of San Diego Cultural Diversity Committee.

Most recently, Ms. Cabato was the co-chair of the new Filipinos of South Bay Exhibit (FOSBE) at the Chula Vista Library, which shares stories of Filipinos of the South Bay in San Diego County.

Ms. Cabato is being honored as the 51st District Constituent of the Month in October 2022, during Filipino American History Month. She is recognized for her work preserving and promoting Asian Pacific culture through the arts and contributing to the overall cultural vitality of the 51st Congressional District. She has vast experience as an arts administrator and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting from San Diego State University.